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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 5450

E.O. 12958: GDS 7/2/86 (HALLMAN, WILLIAM R.) OR-P
TAGS: SHUM AR
SUBJ: (U) HARGUINDEGUY GIVES PEN STATISTICS

1. (C) INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY. INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY OUTLINED KEY STATISTICS REGARDING PEN PRISONERS PRESENT AND PAST IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FRIDAY EVENING (JUN 29). HARGUINDEGUY ASSERTED THAT THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 1,723 PEN DETAINEES AS OF JUNE 28. A TOTAL OF 8,713 PERSONS HAVE BEEN PLACED UNDER PEN SINCE NOVEMBER 01 1974, HE SAID, OF WHICH NUMBERS 5,913 HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THE PAN. EXTRAPOLATING FROM WHAT THE MINISTER SAID AND JUDGING BY OTHER INDICATORS (THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 3,000 PERSONS NOW JAILED FOR OTHER THAN COMMON CRIMES). A NUMBER OF THESE 5,913 MAY HAVE BEEN PUT INTO THE "CHARGED" CATEGORY, SOME TRIED AND CONVICTED, AND MANY OTHERS SIMPLY LET GO. THE MINISTER SAID THAT AT NO TIME HAD THE PEN LIST EXCEEDED 5,013 -- WHICH IT REACHED AT THE END OF 1976. ASKED WHETHER TIMMERMAN MIGHT BE RELEASED THE MINISTER SAID THE MATTER WAS STRICTLY UP TO THE JUNTA. ASKED REGARDING THE DISAPPEARED HARGUINDEGUY ADMITTED THAT LISTS OF CLAIMED DISAPPEARANCES HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND TABULATED -- BUT THAT RELEASE OF A GOVERNMENT LIST WAS STILL

*****USNR COMMENT*****

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